REMARKS

Claims 4-16 are all the claims pending in the application.

In the last Office Action Claims 1-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Swenson *et al.* Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 10-58043. Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Krumholz. Claims 4-9 were indicated as being directed to allowable subject.

Claims 1-3 inclusive have been canceled without prejudice in order to advance the prosecution of the present application. Claim 4 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of Claim 1 from which it depended therefore making Claim 4 allowable. Claim 5 has been amended to overcome the noted indefiniteness. Therefore, Claims 3-9 inclusive are now considered to be allowable.

New Claims 10-16 inclusive have been herewith. New Claim 10 is slightly different from Claim 1 and was approved for grant by the European Patent Office.

The object of the present invention is to reduce to negligible values the deformations of the toolholder beams carrying the bending tools. As shown in figure 7 of the present application, in order to solve the above object, it is necessary that the points of application of the elastic force R to the precision structure 17 move of the same quantity f under the bending load q. In view of the fact that the deformations of the reaction structure 15 in correspondence with the various elastic devices 19 are not equal, in order to ensure that the precision structure 17 moves parallel to itself under the bending load q, the rigidities K_i of the elastic devices 19 must be different from each other. On pages 7 and 8 of the present application there is described how to calculate the rigidities K_i of the various elastic devices 19. If the rigidities K_i of the elastic devices 19 were equal to each other, it would be impossible to ensure that the precision structure 17 moves parallel to itself under the action of the bending load q. The fact that the rigidities K_i are mutually different, as indicated in the characterizing portion of new claim 10, represents therefore an essential feature in order to solve the problem on which the present invention is based.

Swenson does not teach nor suggest elastic devices with mutually different rigidities. On column 1 lines 60-65, Swenson teaches an elastic element (17) with constant thickness and rigidity. Swenson fails to teach that the rigidities of the elastic elements must be different in order to obtain the desired accuracy during the bending operations.

JP-A-10058043 aims at preventing saddle-like formations of the pieces during the bending operations. The teaching of JP'043 consists in applying a traction force on the bending tool in the direction of the bending line. There is no disclosure in JP'043 about providing a reaction structure and a precision structure and elastic devices between such structures having mutually different rigidities.

Krumholtz refers to spring members in column 4, lines 10-20 and column 6, lines 55-70. Such elastic elements have the purpose of supporting the weight of the toolholder structure 17 so as to provide a preload sufficient to ensure a central contact between the structures 17 and 15. The elastic elements that support and preload the upper beam 10 against the piston rods 22 have a similar purpose. The fact that such elastic elements have no influence on the deformation of the beams is evident in the embodiment of figures 5 and 6, wherein the elastic elements 36 are replaced by rigid guiding devices. As a final remark, Krumholtz is based on the principle of coupling the deformed lines of the toolholder beams: such beams are therefore deformed whereas in the present invention the toolholder beams remain substantially undeformed.

In view of the foregoing comments with respect to new Claims 10-16 inclusive it is submitted that these claims are clearly patentable over the teachings of Swenson, JP 10-58043 and Krumholz. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that Claim 4-16 inclusive be allowed and the application passed to issue forthwith.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert V. Sloan
Registration No. 22,775

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

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